

Salvation Message in the Gospels (II)

The Message of John, Jesus, the Twelve, the Seventy

To the Lost Sheep of the House of Israel

The Kingdom of the Heavens Is at Hand

(This article deals with continuing material concerning the salvation message seen throughout the four gospels, a salvation message previously seen beginning with Moses and subsequently seen in Acts and the epistles, with the salvation in this message ultimately realized following time and events referenced in Revelation.

For companion articles, refer to:

“Salvation Message in the Gospels” (I)

“Salvation Message in Acts” (I, II)

“Salvation Message in the Epistles” (I, II)

“Salvation Realized in Revelation”

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand.

For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” (Matt. 3:1-3).

“Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee...

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of the heavens is at hand” (Matt. 4:12, 17).

“And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

Now the names of the twelve apostles are these...

These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of the heavens is at hand” (Matt. 10:1, 2a, 5-7).

“After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come...

And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you” (Luke 10:1, 9).

The central message in the four gospels is plain and simple enough to understand and deal with, and the same is true concerning the epistles (Pauline, Hebrews, the general epistles, and the seven epistles in Rev. 2, 3).

But the Book of Acts, forming somewhat of a bridge between the gospels and the epistles, is where matters can become complex, though that need not be the case.

And the approach that so many Christians seem to take — seeing the message of salvation by grace through faith, with eternal verities, as the central message throughout — certainly hasn’t helped matters.

In fact, this type approach to the New Testament, beginning with the gospels, usually centering on John’s gospel as the one gospel written to tell an unsaved person how to be saved, *has caused insurmountable problems in correct Biblical interpretation.*

Following this type approach will, for all practical purposes, close the door to any overall, correct interpretation throughout the New Testament, which reflects back upon and negatively impacts correctly understanding the Old Testament in the same manner.

One simply CAN'T approach Scripture from a wrong stand-point and, in the end, come out right. "Error" does NOT work that way. It NEVER has, and it NEVER will.

As well, it matters little what man may think about something — what is or is not important, what this or that means, etc. When it comes to Biblical interpretation, expressions such as, "I think...", "I believe...", should be stricken from one's vocabulary.

That which a person thinks or believes, when it comes to Biblical interpretation, is OF NO MOMENT WHATSOEVER!

THE ONLY THING OF ANY MOMENT is what God has to say about the matter, expressing His thoughts and/or ways on the subject, recorded in His Word, which are invariably quite different than man's thoughts and/or ways:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

When a person seeks understanding concerning things in Scripture, *understanding MUST ALWAYS be derived from ONE SOURCE ALONE! And it MUST ALWAYS be derived ONE WAY ALONE!*

Scripture has been designed to explain itself. That is the way God, through His Spirit, structured His Word. *Scripture MUST be compared with Scripture to derive and understand God's thoughts and/or ways, NEVER through any method involving man's thoughts and/or ways.*

With the preceding in mind, what does Scripture itself have to say about the central subject seen throughout the New Testament, *which can ONLY have its base in and be an outworking of that previously seen in the Old Testament?*

And that can be shown by simply taking the God-Breathed Word — which contains things quite different than have been “seen,” “heard,” or “have entered into the heart of man” — and allowing the Spirit to reveal “the deep things of God” through “comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (I Cor. 2:9-13).

The only alternate to the preceding is seen in the next verse (v. 14), *through “natural” means*. And this verse, kept within context, *could ONLY refer to a saved individual resorting to the natural rather than to the spiritual in Biblical interpretation*.

Salvation, a Revealed Goal

ONE CENTRAL MESSAGE, with its base in and carried over from the Old Testament, pervades the gospels. This message has to do with “salvation,” which can be traced back to a beginning point in the opening verses of Genesis.

Salvation, deliverance, is the central message pervading ALL Scripture.

But, WHAT salvation is being dealt with? WHAT deliverance is in view? Salvation, deliverance, has more than one aspect in Scripture, *though the ultimate goal is always seen to be the SAME*.

1) The Basic, Overall Type

Note in this respect the basic, overall type beginning in Ex. 12.

The Israelites under Moses, through the death of paschal lambs, were delivered from the death of the firstborn while still in Egypt.

They were subsequently delivered at the Red Sea crossing through God opening the waters for them to cross and then closing the waters upon Pharaoh and his armed forces.

And they could have been delivered from the nations inhabiting the land at Kadesh-Barnea had they not disbelieved God and rebelled against His chosen leader, Moses.

In this same respect, when reading and dealing with things in the gospels, *WHY* do so many Christians fix their attention on a *singular subject with respect to salvation, deliverance?*

Invariably, individuals doing this see salvation by grace through faith as the central message throughout Scripture, attempting to align practically everything in the gospels with this message, which is the message seen in that dealt with in the death of the paschal lambs in the preceding overall type.

WHY do individuals do this, particularly since this is *NOT at all* the plainly revealed central subject matter seen throughout the gospels, much less all Scripture?

And it is also quite clear that John's gospel is *NO different* than the other three in this respect, dealing with the same subject matter. It is simply *NOT possible* to read and study through the gospels, seeing three of the gospels dealing with and centering around one subject and John's gospel dealing with and centering around another.

The central message throughout ALL four gospels is plainly seen to be THE SAME, though from different perspectives. ALL four can clearly be seen to deal with different facets of EXACTLY THE SAME central message, and salvation by grace through faith is NOT that message.

In fact, there is *NO such thing* as any book in Scripture — Old Testament or New Testament — dealing centrally with salvation by grace. Though this message can be seen throughout Scripture, beginning in the opening verses of

Genesis, *salvation by grace is simply NOT the central subject matter at hand anywhere in Scripture. Rather, salvation by grace is ALWAYS seen as the beginning point of the central subject, the central message (e.g., Ex. 12ff; Eph. 2:8-10).*

Jude sought to write an epistle dealing with salvation by grace, *BUT the Spirit stopped him and moved Jude to write on another subject, on apostasy (vv. 3ff).*

And, as previously noted, *ANY* of the other epistles is the same, *AS* is Acts, *AS* are the four gospels, *AS* are all Old Testament books.

And the preceding is *NOT* to minimize the importance of the message surrounding salvation by grace through faith, *for this is where one MUST begin. But a person is NOT to remain there. He is TO GO ON. And that is EXACTLY what ALL Scripture does.*

2) Continuing with the Type

The Israelites under Moses *DIDN'T remain in Egypt, continuing to deal with death and shed blood in relation to the death of the firstborn.*

NO, they left Egypt under Moses, en route to a land set before them, to which they had been called.

NOR are Christians under Christ *to continue dealing with death and shed blood in relation to the death of the firstborn.*

NO, they are TO MOVE ON to things pertaining to a land set before them, to which they have been called.

And *THIS* is the way Scripture is structured.

Scripture BEGINS with death and shed blood in relation to the death of the firstborn. But Scripture DOESN'T stay there. Scripture MOVES ON toward a GOAL, which the beginning makes possible, a GOAL in another land to which the one having appropriated the blood of a dead paschal lamb in the type, the blood of the slain Paschal Lamb in the antitype, has been called.

The Kingdom Proclaimed Throughout

Salvation by grace through faith is *NOT* seen as the central message throughout any one of the four gospels, the epistles or any place elsewhere in Scripture, *for a revealed reason*.

And that is quite easy to show, if done the Biblical way — *simply allow Scripture to address the issue*.

Man, in the beginning, was created *for REGAL purposes* (Gen. 1:26-28), his fall had to do *with these purposes* (Gen. 3:1ff), and *God's purpose* for restoring fallen man — revealed at the beginning in Genesis and dealt with throughout the Old Testament — *was REGAL*. *This purpose was to ultimately undo all things surrounding the fall and place man back in the regal position seen at the time of his creation* (Gen. 3:15, 21; Rom. 11:29).

1) A Divine Work

To work out His plans and purposes, God, 2,000 years beyond man's creation and fall, called one man out of the human race — Abraham. And *ALL THINGS* involved in Abraham's call (Gen. 12:1-3), a separate and distinct creation formed in his grandson, Jacob (Isa. 43:1), and the bringing into existence of the nation of Israel from the loins of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob — a nation through which God would work out His plans and purposes — *had to do with God ultimately placing man back in the position for which he had been created in the beginning*.

Jesus, having been sent through the nation emanating from the loins of Abraham, was born "King" (Matt. 2:2). He appeared on this earth and presented Himself to the Jewish people in this respect (Matt. 4:12ff; 21:1-5; John 1:11; *cf.* Zech. 9:9), and salvation, deliverance for Israel in connection with His message, had to do with *His kingship and kingdom* (Matt. 21:6-9).

2) *A Particular Message, for a Particular People*

As seen throughout the gospels — begun by John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1ff), continued by Jesus (Matt. 4:12ff), the Twelve (Matt. 10:1ff), and the Seventy (Luke 10:1ff) — *the message was directed to Israel pertaining to deliverance with respect to the kingdom.*

The message throughout was *for Israel ALONE*, and it had *NOTHING* to do with the message of salvation by grace through faith. Rather, it had to do with *an OFFER of the kingdom of the heavens* (an expression used thirty-two times in Matthew's gospel), *BASED on national repentance* (e.g., as seen in Daniel's repentant prayer on behalf of himself and the nation in Dan. 9:3-19).

(The expression, "the kingdom of heaven" [KJV, et al.], should be translated, "the kingdom of the heavens" in all occurrences. Both nouns are *articular*, and "heaven" is always *plural* in the Greek text [*he basileia ton ouranon*].)

This expression is peculiar to Matthew's gospel, except possibly John 3:5. A number of Greek manuscripts have "the kingdom of the heavens" instead of "the kingdom of God" in this verse.

However, the matter of how John 3:5 should read in this respect is immaterial. All four gospels are about *the offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel, based on national repentance*. And the expression, "the kingdom of God," as it is used throughout all four gospels *would have to be understood in this same respect [limited to the heavenly sphere of the kingdom, seen in the subject matter at hand and articulated as such in Matthew's gospel]*.

Note for example in Matt. 19:23, 24, both expressions appear and are used *in a synonymous respect* [cf. Matt. 10:7; Luke 10:9]. And this same usage of "the kingdom of God," as will become evident in later chapters in this book, carries over into the Book of Acts and the epistles.)

The offer of the kingdom to Israel, beginning with John, had to do *with the heavenly aspect of the kingdom* (the realm from whence Satan and his angels then ruled and continue to rule today), *NOT the earthly*, the kingdom covenanted to David, centered in Jerusalem on earth.

This heavenly aspect of the kingdom was introduced in Genesis in connection with Abraham and Melchizedek (Gen. 14:18-20) and is seen referenced and/or dealt with numerous times throughout both Testaments (*cf.* Gen. 22:15-18; 26:3, 4; 28:3, 4, 12-15; Dan. 7:18-27; Heb. 11:8-12). Thus, this facet of the kingdom was far from something new, proclaimed and offered to Israel on the basis of national repentance.

(Note that the kingdom [the earth] is first seen in the opening verses of Scripture, in the restoration of this kingdom, though the two aspects of the kingdom [heavenly, and earthly] are not dealt with until later in Scripture.)

2) Beyond Salvation by Grace

There is *NOTHING* in this central message pervading the gospels that is even remotely connected with salvation by grace.

From the type in Exodus, alluded to earlier, salvation by grace is seen in things having to do with the death of the paschal lambs while still in Egypt.

That being proclaimed throughout the gospel accounts *has to do with things beyond the death of the paschal lambs* (foreshadowing Christ's death at Calvary, as the Paschal Lamb), *with a deliverance relating to the land of their inheritance, though seen as heavenly, NOT earthly.*

And *THIS ALONE* would tell a person something about those in Israel to whom this message was being proclaimed and the offer extended. Those being dealt with throughout the gospels — dealt with relative to that which lay beyond the death of the paschal lambs — *could ONLY have been a*

saved people, NOT unsaved in need of applying the blood of the paschal lambs back in Egypt.

And all of this should be easy enough for anyone to see and understand, for the Jewish people to whom Christ came were still sacrificing the paschal lambs year after year. And, on that basis, they *could ONLY* have been just as saved as the generation which left Egypt under Moses, with God seeing efficacy in death and shed blood both times, *along with ALL of the times between where death and shed blood were seen.*

Solely from a Biblical standpoint, *it would be IMPOSSIBLE to see efficacy during Moses' day but not see THE SAME THING 1,500 years later, with the same people and the same set of circumstances.*

As well, had Christ come to an unsaved nation 2,000 years ago, it would have been *EQUALLY IMPOSSIBLE* to see John, Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy dealing with a message concerning the land set before them — which is what they were doing, *a heavenly land* in this case — without first dealing with a message concerning the application of the blood of dead paschal lambs, or the shed blood of the Paschal Lamb about to die.

Had the nation been comprised of unsaved Jews at this time, and had John, Jesus, the Twelve, and later the Seventy not begun with a message concerning the death and shed blood of paschal lambs, they would have been ignoring that foreshadowed by things seen on day one in Gen. 1 and beginning with that foreshadowed by things seen in days two through six.

Scripture is simply NOT structured in such a manner, NOT at the beginning or any place beyond that.

And, if a person wants to see a basis for God recognizing efficacy in the shed blood of paschal lambs either during Moses' day or 1,500 years later when Christ was on earth the first time, note the statement in Rev. 13:8:

“And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*”

(Also note something about that seen in the preceding several paragraphs in connection with the importance of Biblical typology, one of the many different ways that God has structured His Word [Heb. 1:1, 2].

The saved status of the nation when Christ came the first time *CAN EASILY BE SEEN FROM THE TYPES*, as *previously outlined.*

And, in that respect, a main reason why a high percentage of Christians make the mistake of trying to see a message of salvation by grace throughout the gospels, with the message directed to individuals comprising an unsaved nation, *can ONLY be the neglect of and often disdain for the types.*

And because of this, they, in reality, are neglecting/rejecting a large portion of the revealed Word.

And this part of the Word is something which, as previously seen, would open other parts of the Word to their understanding, preventing them from making mistakes of this nature in Biblical interpretation.

And this particular mistake is far from something minor in Biblical interpretation. *This is something MAJOR, VERY MAJOR.*

[As an added note to illustrate *the importance of types*, numerous Christians, attempting to show the importance of the study of prophecy, often say that twenty-five to thirty percent of the Old Testament is prophetic in nature.

But, saying this, they have ignored something about Scripture, for *the percentage is MUCH, MUCH higher. They have ignored God's built-in typical aspect of Scripture.*

Including the types would probably *more than double the percentage figures that many present (e.g., referencing the types, try to find something in the Pentateuch alone that, from a typical standpoint, was not prophetic 3,500 years ago or even remains prophetic today.*

Most of Genesis remains prophetic today, all of Exodus does...].)

John's Gospel

And if anyone wants to see the Gospel of John as somehow different than the other three gospels in the preceding respect, note *the eight signs* around which the gospel is built and what is *NOT ONLY* dealt with in the signs *BUT* that which signs have to do with.

That dealt with in these eight signs has to do *with Israel*, with these signs carrying matters out into *the future, into a future kingdom, showing the nation, at that time, what they could have IF they would but heed the proclaimed message and repent.*

And this gospel today shows what they one day will have when repentance is forthcoming.

Signs in Scripture, as illustrated in the preceding paragraph, have to do with two inseparable things — Israel and the kingdom. And IF both are NOT present, signs, in the true Biblical sense, CANNOT EXIST.

Signs have NOTHING to do with the Church or with the gospel of grace. Instead, as previously stated, they have to do with ISRAEL, and they have to do with THIS nation in relation to THE KINGDOM.

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author's article, "Signs, Wonders, Miracles.")

"Signs" are seen extensively dealt with throughout all four gospels and the Book of Acts.

They are seen throughout both the offer [in the gospels] and the re-offer [in Acts] of the kingdom to Israel. Beyond that, they ceased being manifested, as stated in I Cor. 13:8-10 [*ref. previously mentioned article*].

And the eight signs around which John's gospel is built *ALL* have to do with and point to *EXACTLY the same thing* [Israel, the kingdom, and conditions during a seventh 1,000-year period when the kingdom will be realized].

And this is *EXACTLY* what is seen in *NOT ONLY* the other three gospels *BUT* the Book of Acts as well [*ref. the author's articles, "Salvation Message in Acts" (I, II)*].

Thus, attempts to single John's gospel out as being different than the other three in this respect, as being the one gospel written to relate the message of salvation by grace, can easily be shown to *NOT ONLY be false BUT very misleading as well* [*casting a completely wrong light upon the purpose for John's gospel*] by simply allowing *Scripture to speak for and interpret itself.*)

The Gospel of John, written sometime between about 40 to 60 AD (a window in time accepted by many who study these things), records eight signs performed by Christ during His earthly ministry (the eighth sign has to do with events surrounding Calvary and the empty tomb [*cf. John 2:18-22*]).

"Signs" were directed to Israel during the offer of the kingdom (by Jesus, the Twelve, and the Seventy) and redirected to Israel during the re-offer of the kingdom (starting with the one hundred twenty in Acts 2 [v. 43], later through the signs in John's gospel [which show that this gospel had to be written before the close of the re-offer, before about 62 AD, *else the stated purpose for this gospel, incorporating these signs, could NOT be realized*]).

And the *stated purpose* for these signs being manifested in the offer (during time seen in the four gospels), with eight of these original signs singled out in John's gospel (written during the Acts period) is given toward the end of John's gospel:

“And many other signs [having to do with Israel in relation to the proffered kingdom] truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

But these are written [‘these have been recorded’], that ye [a plural pronoun, the entire Jewish nation] might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life [‘life’ in relation to that being offered, ‘*life*’ in the Messianic kingdom] through his name” (John 20:30, 31).

And attempts by well-meaning Christians to take these two verses and associate them with the gospel of grace, showing a completely wrong purpose for John’s gospel, has probably done more to pervert or destroy any correct understanding of the message seen throughout the gospels than possibly any other one thing.

(Also note that something similar to that done with John’s gospel has been done with John’s first epistle as well — erroneously seeing this epistle, as John’s gospel, dealing centrally with eternal salvation.

Both books begin in a similar manner [“In the beginning...”; “That which was from the beginning...”], both are written to saved people [John’s gospel, to the Jewish people during the re-offer of the kingdom; John’s first epistle, to Christians], and both have similar, declared purpose statements toward the end of each book [John 20:31 (see quotation, top of page); I John 5:13]:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life [*lit.*, ‘life for the age,’ which is the central subject of the epistle, *NOT* eternal life], and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

The Gospel of John deals with signs and the Jews in relation to the proffered kingdom, and I John deals with Christians, apart from signs, in relation to the same proffered kingdom.

The Gospel of John deals with *being brought forth from above* [1:12, 13; 3:3-10] in relation to Jews and the proffered

kingdom, and I John deals with the same overall subject in relation to Christians [2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18].

That is, *both books deal with saved people being brought forth from above rather than from below in relation to the profured kingdom.*

For related information on the preceding, refer to the author's articles, "Aion, Aionios," "Misuse of John 20:30, 31," "Repentance, Belief in John's Gospel," and "Biblical Subject and Structure."

Also, see the author's book, *Brought Forth from Above.*)

Rejection of the Offer, Crucifixion of Israel's King

To further illustrate the nature of the message seen throughout the gospels, carrying matters into Acts, then into the epistles, note that which Israel's religious leaders brought to pass through their opposition to the Messenger and His message.

Israel's religious leaders — particularly the Pharisees, who, by their very numbers, governed and controlled the religious life of the people — *followed Christ about the country, seeking, at every opportunity, to cast reproach upon Him, His disciples, and their ministry to Israel.*

Through this means, the Pharisees, along with the Scribes (the teachers and keepers of the Law, the fundamental legalists in Israel), were the ones primarily responsible (the Sadducees to a lesser extent) for a national rejection of the Messenger and His message, leading to and ending with the events surrounding Calvary.

In days immediately preceding the Cross, because of what the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees had caused, Christ cursed a fig tree which He came across en route to Jerusalem:

"Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever [*lit.*, ‘henceforward with respect to the age’]. And presently the fig tree withered away” (Matt. 21:18, 19).

(On the preceding translation of “forever” as “with respect to the age” — Greek, *eis ton aiona* — again, refer to the author’s article, “Aion, Aionios.”)

“The fig tree” is used in Scripture to symbolize *Israel* (Hosea 9:10; Joel 1:6-12). And Christ used this particular fig tree to *NOT ONLY* make a statement concerning the nation’s barren condition *BUT* also where this condition was about to take the nation.

There was NO FRUIT on the tree, NOTHING but leaves. And because of this, because of what had happened over the course of the past three to three and one-half years — *Christ seeking fruit from the nation, but finding ONLY a barren tree* — cursed the fruitless fig tree, cursed fruitless Israel, saying, “Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward with respect to the age.”

The reference to fruitlessness had to do with THE KINGDOM which had been offered, and the time in view relative to fruitlessness would be THE COMING AGE, THE MESSIANIC ERA.

Fruit will appear on the tree during the coming age. This is quite clear from the Prophets. But, NO FRUIT will appear on the tree relative to the heavenly sphere of the kingdom. That, as well, is quite clear.

And exactly why this would be the case, aside from the nation having borne no fruit, is seen farther down in the chapter, following the parable of the Householder and His vineyard (vv. 33-39).

Note Christ’s question to the chief priests and Pharisees concerning this parable (v. 40), their response (v. 41), Christ’s response in return (vv. 42-44), and the chief priests and Pharisees’ thoughts expressed among themselves (v. 45):

“When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?”

They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?

Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them” (Matt. 21:40-45).

Note verse forty-three in the preceding.

Because of that which had been done, resulting in rejection on the fruitless nation's part, Christ announced in the presence of those primarily responsible (Israel's religious leaders) that “the kingdom of God” (that facet of the kingdom which had been offered to and rejected by Israel, the kingdom of the heavens, the heavenly sphere of the kingdom [*ref. indented text on page eight of this article*]) would be *taken from Israel* and “given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

On the day of Pentecost, about two months later, this “nation,” a completely new entity, was brought into existence — *the one new man* “in Christ” (*cf.* II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:11-16; I Peter 2:9-11).

And God used this new entity, the one brought into existence to be the recipient of and be allowed to bring forth fruit for this sphere of the kingdom, to re-offer this kingdom to Israel.

This began in Acts chapter two and is seen being continued for about the next three decades throughout the Book of Acts, ending with Paul being rejected by the Jewish religious leaders in Rome.

And for the third and final time, following two previous climactic rejections, Paul announced to these Jewish religious leaders in Rome that this message would now be carried to the Gentiles (Acts 28:16-31; *cf.* Acts 13:14-46; 18:1-6).

And that is where Acts ends and the epistles pick up, with *Israel completely set aside for the remainder of the dispensation and the Church ALONE seen as the ONE NOT ONLY NOW in possession of the heavenly aspect of the kingdom but the ONLY ONE NOW in a position to bring forth fruit for this part of the kingdom.*

(That seen in the preceding three paragraphs — moving beyond the gospels into the Book of Acts, then into the epistles — is dealt with in subsequent companion articles.

Refer to: “Salvation Message in Acts” [I, II] and “Salvation Message in the Epistles” [I, II].)